

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUCAR 05589 101122Z
ACTION EUR-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /004 W
-----026219 101125Z /15
P 101017Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1005

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 5589

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OGEN RO

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

FOR SCHMIDT FROM SIMONS, EUR/EE THREE COPIES ONLY

1. VANIK QUESTIONS (STATE 197678). HERewith EMBASSY COMMENTS
ON VERY FINE DRAFT RESPONSES IN REFTEL, SO FINE OUR SUGGESTIONS
ARE SMALL-TO-NIGGLING EXCEPT IN ON INSTANCE.

2. ANSWER ON EMIGRATION CYCLES, LAST SENTENCE, "OVERALL---
AMENDMENT": DELETE "HOWEVER."

3. ANSWER ON HARASSMENT, FIRST SENTENCE, "AN APPLICANT...
EMIGRATION": REPLACE "POTENTIAL" BY "THE POSSIBILITY OF."

4. ANSWER ON HARASSMENT, FOURTH SENTENCE, "AT EVERY STEP...
COUNTRY": REVISE TO READ: "AT EVERY STEP ALONG THE
PROCEDURAL WAY, HE MAY FACE LONG DELAYS, OR ABRUPT REFUSALS
TO DEAL WITH HIS APPLICATION, OR EVEN STATEMENTS THAT HE
WILL NEVER BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY." WE BELIEVE
SUCH STATEMENTS ARE MORE RARE THAN FIRST TWO DEVELOPMENTS.

5. ANSWER ON EMIGRATION RATE TO ISRAEL. WE WOULD
SUGGEST REVISION OF ENTIRE PARAGRAPH ALONG FOLLOWING
LINES, IN INTEREST OF MORE PLAUSIBLE BALANCE: THERE ARE
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PAGE 02 BUCAR 05589 101122Z

CONFLICTING EXPLANATIONS OFFERED FOR THE LOW RATE OF
EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL. THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE
COMPLICATED ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES, THE OCCASIONAL
HARASSMENT AND THE GENERAL POLICY HOSTILITY TO EMIGRATION
WHICH AFFECT ALL THOSE WHO WISH TO LEAVE ROMANIA
PERMANENTLY APPLY IN FULL MEASURE TO ROMANIAN JEWS WHO
MIGHT WISH TO APPLY FOR DEPARTURE TO ISRAEL. WE ARE

THEREFORE INCLINED TO AGREE WITH THOSE OBSERVERS WHO ARGUE THAT THERE ARE NUMBERS OF ROMANIAN JEWS WHO WOULD WISH TO EMIGRATE IF THEY DID NOT FACE SUCH OBSTACLES. ON THE OTHER HAND, ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES, WITH SOME SUPPORT FROM OUTSIDE OBSERVERS, ARGUE THAT THE POOL OF ROMANIAN JEWS INTERESTED IN EMIGRATING HAS SHRUNK TO A NUMBER WHICH CANNOT POSSIBLY SUSTAIN THE EARLIER MONTHLY RATES OF DEPARTURE. THEY POINT OUT THAT THE ROMANIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY IS ONLY A FRACTION OF ITS SIZE FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II, AS A RESULT OF THE EMIGRATION, WITH GOVERNMENT APPROVAL, OF APPROXIMATELY 300,000-400,000 ROMANIAN JEWS. ESTIMATES OF THE CURRENT SIZE OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ROMANIA RANGE FROM THE OFFICIAL CENSUS-BASED FIGURE OF 25,000 TO SOME PRIVATE ESTIMATES OF UP TO 80,000. BUT THERE IS FAIRLY GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT WHATEVER THE SIZE OF THE COMMUNITY, A LARGE PERCENTAGE IS ELDERLY, AND PROBABLY LESS INTERESTED IN EMIGRATION AS A RESULT.

6. ANSWER ON LISTS, FOURTH SENTENCE, "WE BELIEVE... INDIVIDUAL CASES." WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND SENTENCE, WHICH READS "WE BELIEVE THIS IS VEST RPT VEST CHANNEL FOR TAKING UP INDIVIDUAL CASES," AND THUS DOES NOT APPEAR TO TRACK WITH INTRODUCTION TO SEVERAL REASONS "WE HAVE NOT DONE SO." MEANING SHOULD BE CLARIFIED.

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PAGE 03 BUCAR 05589 101122Z

7. CAT RECOMMENDATIONS. AS YOU ADVISED, OUR COMMENTS ARE BEING TRANSMITTED OPEN CHANNEL.

8. I SHALL BE IN MOLDAVIA WITH RELATIVES AUGUST 11-12, AND JOHN TIPTON WILL BE ACTING AS DCM FOR THOSE TWO DAYS. AGGREY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BUCHAR05589
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780327-0658
Format: TEL
From: BUCHAREST
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780875/aaaackzs.tel
Line Count: 100
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 66b15b65-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1772592
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL FOR SCHMIDT FROM SIMONS, EUR/EE THREE COPIES ONLY
TAGS: OGEN, RO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/66b15b65-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014